
HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE AUDITOR TO CONDUCT A FINANCIAL AND MANAGEMENT
AUDIT OF THE PLANT QUARANTINE BRANCH OF THE DEPARTMENT OF
AGRICULTURE AND EVALUATE A PROPOSAL TO MOVE THE PLANT
QUARANTINE BRANCH TO THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION.

1 WHEREAS, Hawaii's tourism industry heavily relies on
2 Hawaii's unique environment; and
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4 WHEREAS, there are more endangered species in the State of
5 Hawaii than in any other state in the United States, and of all
6 the plants and birds known to be extinct in the United States,
7 two-thirds are from Hawaii; and
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9 WHEREAS, introduced, non-native species have and will
10 continue to have devastating impacts on Hawaii's agriculture,
11 natural environment, economy, public health, and quality-of-
12 life; and
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14 WHEREAS, once established, invasive species cause millions
15 of dollars in damage to agriculture and the environment, serious
16 public concerns, and cannot readily be eradicated; and
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18 WHEREAS, without vigilant inspection, the public health,
19 safety, and welfare is in danger from introduction and
20 establishment of these insects, diseases, viruses, and
21 prohibited and restricted plants and animals; and
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23 WHEREAS, the only two pathways for introduced, non-native
24 species to arrive in Hawaii are through air and maritime
25 transportation; and
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27 WHEREAS, air transportation has been proven to be the
28 highest-risk pathway, transporting introduced species that are



1 much more likely to become established, as well as various
2 illegal plants and animals; and

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4 WHEREAS, the inspection at the marine ports is considered
5 the most effective quarantine measure to reduce entry of
6 unwanted animals and plants into Hawaii; and

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8 WHEREAS, the community and the Legislature feel that the
9 importance of prohibiting non-native species is a priority and
10 is required at all ports; and

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12 WHEREAS, members of the agricultural sector, environmental
13 sector, and the community have expressed concern over the
14 Department of Agriculture's lack of transparency and progress on
15 the implementation of the biosecurity program established
16 pursuant to section 150A-51, Hawaii Revised Statutes; and

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18 WHEREAS, specifically, there are increased concerns about
19 the Department of Agriculture's inability to hire inspectors in
20 a timely manner; now, therefore,

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22 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
23 Twenty-eighth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular
24 Session of 2015, the Senate concurring, that the Auditor is
25 requested to conduct a financial and management audit of the
26 Plant Quarantine Branch of the Department of Agriculture; and

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28 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature requests that
29 the audit include:

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31 (1) A discussion on the current state of the Plant
32 Quarantine Branch of the Department of Agriculture;
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34 (2) Recommendations on the necessary resources needed for
35 the Plant Quarantine Branch to fully and properly
36 carry out its purpose and responsibilities pursuant to
37 chapter 150A, Hawaii Revised Statutes; and
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39 (3) An evaluation of a proposal to move either part or all
40 of the functions of the Plant Quarantine Branch to the
41 Department of Transportation; and
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BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Auditor is requested to submit any findings, recommendations, and any proposed legislation to the Governor and the Legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of the Regular Session of 2016; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Governor, the Auditor, and the Chairperson of the Board of Agriculture.

OFFERED BY:

Lindadchingne

RECEIVEDJohn R.

Bulder

Dakota's Son

Paul Sheng

OK

Sung Sun

Hany John

Tom Brown

Sung H. Lark

L. A.

J. M.

J. M.

J. M.

